## 1AC – Democracy

#### American democracy is backsliding now because of intense polarization—it’s on the brink.

Talisse 1/3 (Robert B. Talisse; Robert B. Talisse is W. Alton Jones Professor of Philosophy, Vanderbilt University; published 1-3-2022; "America’s political polarization is a threat to healthy democracy"; https://chicago.suntimes.com/2022/1/3/22865507/political-polarization-partisanship-democracy-america-robert-talisse-the-conversation-op-ed; accessed 2-21-2022; Elkins AM)

**For the first time**, the United States has been classified as a “[**backsliding democracy**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2021/11/22/united-states-backsliding-democracies-list-first-time/)” in a [global assessment of democratic societies](https://www.idea.int/gsod/global-report#chapter-2-democracy-health-check:-an-overview-of-global-tre) by the **International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance**, an **intergovernmental research group**. One key reason is the [continuing popularity](https://www.yahoo.com/now/republicans-resist-saying-3-simple-052438273.html) among Republicans of [**false allegations**](https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/exhaustive-fact-check-finds-little-evidence-of-voter-fraud-but-2020s-big-lie-lives-on) of [**widespread**](https://apnews.com/article/voter-fraud-election-2020-joe-biden-donald-trump-7fcb6f134e528fee8237c7601db3328f)[**voter fraud**](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/opinion/election-vote-fraud-data.html) in the 2020 presidential election. But according to the organization’s secretary general, the “**most concerning**” aspect of American democracy is “[**runaway polarization**](https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/nov/22/us-list-backsliding-democracies-civil-liberties-international).” One year after the Jan. 6 Capitol riot, Americans’ perceptions about even the well-documented events of that day are [**divided along partisan lines**](https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2021/09/28/declining-share-of-republicans-say-it-is-important-to-prosecute-jan-6-rioters/). Polarization [**looms**](https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/15/opinion/republicans-democracy-minority-rule.html)[**large**](https://dividedwefall.com/the-seeds-of-dysfunction-why-this-polarization-is-not-like-the-others/) in many [diagnoses](https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2021-12-17/u-s-democracy-faces-real-threats) of America’s current [political struggles](https://news.usc.edu/194874/why-is-america-divided/). Some [researchers](https://www.salon.com/2021/12/08/us-political-polarization-tipping-point/) warn of an approaching “[**tipping point**](https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2021/12/tipping-point-makes-partisan-polarization-irreversible)” of **irreversible polarization**. [Suggested](https://heterodoxacademy.org/library/political-polarization-resource-list/) [remedies](https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2021/12/18/polarization-america-how-fight-forces-dividing-our-nation/6460116001/?gnt-cfr=1) [are](https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/62-special-issue/can-americas-political-polarization-be-fixed/) [available](https://charleskochfoundation.org/stories/principled-dissent-will-reduce-polarization/) [from](https://www.cnn.com/2019/10/30/opinions/fractured-states-of-america-polarization-is-killing-us-avlon/index.html) [across](https://www.publichealth.columbia.edu/public-health-now/news/political-polarization-often-not-bad-we-think) [the](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/11/30/why-american-politics-is-so-stuck-and-what-new-research-shows-about-how-to-fix-it-523517) partisan spectrum. There are [two types of polarization](https://3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2018/12/our-polarization-problem.html), as I discuss in my book “[Sustaining Democracy](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/sustaining-democracy-9780197556450?cc=us&lang=en&).” One isn’t inherently dangerous; the other can be. And together, they can be extremely destructive of democratic societies. If the ideological differences between opposing parties are large, they can produce **logjams**, **standoffs** and **inflexibility** in governments. Though it can be frustrating, political polarization is [not necessarily dysfunctional](https://bpr.berkeley.edu/2019/04/13/the-positives-of-political-polarization/). It even can be [beneficial](https://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2010/05/27/why-political-polarization-might-be-good-for-america), offering true choices for voters and policymakers alike. Deep-seated disagreement can be healthy for democracy, revealing truth amid [differing opinions](https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/R/bo3636475.html). Belief polarization, also called [group polarization](https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.83.4.602), is different. Interaction with like-minded others transforms people into more [extreme versions of themselves](https://quillette.com/2019/05/17/conformity-and-the-dangers-of-group-polarization/). It also leads people to embrace more intensely [negative feelings](https://theconversation.com/political-polarization-is-about-feelings-not-facts-120397) toward people with different views. They come to [define themselves and others](https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12152) primarily in terms of partisanship. Eventually, politics expands beyond policy ideas and into [entire lifestyles](https://theconversation.com/partisan-divide-creates-different-americas-separate-lives-122925). But that’s not all. [As society sorts itself](https://global.oup.com/academic/product/sustaining-democracy-9780197556450?cc=us&lang=en&) into “liberal” and “conservative” [lifestyles](https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12485), people grow more invested in [policing the borders](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1992.tb00952.x) between “us” and “them.” This hostility toward those who disagree makes them more [conformist](https://theconversation.com/what-todays-gop-demonstrates-about-the-dangers-of-partisan-conformity-161401) and intolerant of [differences among allies](https://heterodoxacademy.org/blog/the-need-for-socially-distanced-citizens/). People grow less able to [navigate disagreement](https://phys.org/news/2021-05-politically-polarized-brains-intolerance-uncertainty.html), eventually developing into citizens who believe that democracy is possible only when [everyone agrees with them](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-identity-not-issues-explains-the-partisan-divide/). That is a **profoundly antidemocratic stance**. Belief polarization is toxic for citizens’ relations with one another. But the large-scale dysfunction lies in how political and belief polarization work together in a [mutually reinforcing loop](https://www.discoursemagazine.com/ideas/2021/01/26/the-polarization-dynamic/). When the citizenry is divided into clans fixated on animus, politicians have incentives to amplify hostility. And because the citizenry is [divided over lifestyle choices rather than policy ideas](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-identity-not-issues-explains-the-partisan-divide/), officeholders are **released** from the usual electoral pressure to advance a [legislative platform](https://www.axios.com/mcconnell-no-agenda-midterms-91c73112-0a2e-441b-b713-7e8aa2dad6bf.html). They can **gain reelection simply based on their antagonism**. As politicians escalate their rifts, citizens are cued to **entrench partisan segregation**. This produces **additional belief polarization**, which in turn **rewards political intransigence**. Constructive political processes get submerged in the merely symbolic and tribal, while people’s capacities for [responsible democratic citizenship](https://thefulcrum.us/civic-ed/moral-citizenship) erode. Remedies for polarization tend to focus on how it poisons citizens’ relations. President Joe Biden was correct to stress in his [inaugural address](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/01/20/inaugural-address-by-president-joseph-r-biden-jr/) that Americans need to “lower the temperature” and to “see each other not as adversaries, but as neighbors.” Still, democracy presupposes political disagreement. As James Madison observed, the U.S. needs democracy precisely because self-governing citizens [inevitably will disagree about politics](https://guides.loc.gov/federalist-papers/text-1-10#s-lg-box-wrapper-25493273). A democracy without political divides is no democracy at all. The task is to reestablish the ability to respectfully disagree. But this cannot be accomplished simply by conducting political discussions differently. Research indicates that once people are polarized, exposure even to civil expressions of the other side’s viewpoint [creates more polarization](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1804840115). This is a case of the crucial difference between prevention and cure. In the current situation, even sincere attempts to respectfully engage with the other side [often backfire](https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2102139118). Yet Americans remain democratic citizens, partners in the shared project of self-government. Polarization is a problem that [cannot be solved, but only managed](https://3quarksdaily.com/3quarksdaily/2020/04/democracy-cant-be-fixed.html). It does make relations toxic among political opponents, but it also escalates conformity within coalitions, shrinking people’s concepts of what levels of disagreement are tolerable in like-minded groups. It may be, then, that managing polarization could involve working to counteract conformity by engaging in respectful disagreements with people we see as allies. By taking steps to remember that politics always involves disputation, even among those who vote for the same candidates and affiliate with the same party, Americans may begin to rediscover the ability to respectfully disagree with opponents.

#### Media bias is a key contributor to polarization—it creates a vicious cycle.

Wilson et al. ’20 (Anne E. Wilson, Victoria A. Parker, and Matthew Feinberg; Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada; Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, Canada; published 8-2020; "Polarization in the contemporary political and media landscape"; https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2352154620301078#bib0080; accessed 2-15-2022; Elkins AM)

We also contend that changes in the media landscape contribute to **increased polarization** [40,43]. American media has seen a proliferation of increasingly partisan media including a widening array of online news sources of varying dubiousness. Whereas news in an earlier era was biased toward neutrality and inoffensiveness to capture the largest audience share, in the current high-choice media environment the bias is toward standing out amongst a sea of options [41], which **in itself** may push for **greater polarization** [42]. Of particular theoretical interest is the media model described as the ‘outrage industry’ [43], which selectively amplifies extreme incidents and depicts opponents in an optimally unflattering light. For example, **cherry-picked instances** of **campus progressives behaving illiberally** (e.g. deplatformings) are shared with **disproportionate frequency** in right-wing media bemoaning liberal ‘snowflakes’ or ‘social justice warriors;’ left-wing media in turn prioritizes coverage of the **relatively rare** but **unquestionably egregious** incidents of **white nationalism** and other **overt bigotry**, sometimes **casting these acts as reflective of the entire conservative base**. This selective reporting style may play a **key role** in **exacerbating misconceptions** about opponents and **increasing polarization** [43]. Evidence suggests that media framing and partisan media consumption contribute to negative misperceptions of opponents and to false polarization [20,22,44]. The current media landscape can both **serve** and **intensify partisan bias**. People **actively seek out**, **trust**, and **share** content that **confirms their pre-existing biases** and have an increasingly tailored selection of sources to choose from. Further, traditional trust in mainstream media as a source of factual (even if slanted) information has **fallen sharply** with the rise of ‘**fake news**’ discourse. Although the perception of media bias against one’s party is a long-documented cognitive illusion [45], rising mistrust in mainstream media reduces its value as a means of establishing a shared factual reality. A recent Knight Foundation survey [46] revealed that **most Americans could not name even one news source they considered objective**, though among Republicans who gave an answer, 60% chose Fox News as ‘most objective’ (a view decidedly unaligned with the evidence [53]). Classic confirmation bias and motivated reasoning processes [11,47] may be supercharged in the current media context where any unwelcome factual information can be easily dismissed as untrustworthy or fake. The line between traditional media and social media is blurry at best, with an increasing proportion of people getting their news from social media. We offer only a brief sketch of the online landscape and how it may contribute to polarization. As active consumers and producers of online content, people can curate and co-create their social and informational ecosystems more easily than ever. However, people may misjudge what they see online as representative of the real world in ways that fuel polarization. First, outraged and polarizing moralized content is especially likely to be amplified and spread online [37,48], leading people’s impressions of opponents to be shaped by atypically extreme but salient outliers. Social media is fertile ground for expressing ingroup allegiance and punishing transgressors [49,50], but when these dynamics go viral the impression made by a single fringe member of an opponent group can be multiplied exponentially. For example, a single racist tweet, or a single post of the feminist hashtag #killallmen may be shared and decried by offended opponents thousands of times, making it increasingly difficult to disentangle degree of amplification from the actual prevalence of these attitudes. There is ongoing, unresolved debate regarding whether social media contributes to polarization by limiting exposure to ideological diversity (i.e. ‘echo chambers’) and whether increasing exposure to diverse viewpoints mitigates or worsens polarization [51,52]. The answer is likely ‘it depends,’ and precise mechanisms are not yet clear. Research is only beginning to document the magnitude of the effects of political micro-targeting, fake news, bots, trolls, and algorithms that select for outrage [53]. For the purposes of our analysis, we simply highlight the potential for social media dynamics to amplify the most polarizing voices, increasing people’s misplaced conviction that their partisan opponents are monsters. It may be too soon to say how polarization will be shaped by lives lived online, but because of their reach and malleability, online platforms have the potential to be profoundly consequential. In Figure 1 we offer one potential model connecting various types of polarization into a self-reinforcing cycle. We suggest that rising institutional polarization (among elites, media and social media) **selectively amplify the worst the other side has to offer**, which can feed **directly** into **rising false polarization** among the electorate over time via basic psychological processes such as the availability heuristic [55], and out-group homogeneity effects [56]. In turn, false polarization — especially misperceptions of opponents’ most egregious attitudes — can **intensify outgroup dislike**, **increasing affective polarization** [23]. What about actual ideological polarization? We speculate that increasing affective polarization (especially outgroup dislike) may more often be a cause, rather than a consequence, of ideological polarization over time [16,24] as partisans **blindly maintain allegiance with their side** out of the conviction that the other side is **immeasurably worse**. These types of polarization may be connected in a **feedback loop** starting with **institutions stoking polarization** and eventually leading to **actual increases in party division over time** (which could in turn **further encourage continued polarization** among elites and media). We identify three additional downstream consequences of these phenomena that deserve research attention as potential mechanisms reinforcing the proposed feedback loop. First, as people encounter increasingly extreme positions held either by their elites or the political fringe of their party, negative partisanship may nudge them toward justifying **more and more extreme own-party attitudes** through processes of cognitive dissonance and motivated reasoning [10]. Many partisans may privately struggle with the transgressions and extreme policies of their party elites (from accusations of sexual assault to inhumane border detention conditions), but when faced with the alternatives of rationalizing their party or rejecting it, the latter may be unthinkable to the extent that they believe their opponents to be even more monstrous. This dissonance could push people to double down, excusing even the more egregious policies and scandals that would have seemed unthinkable in the recent past. Second, because we argue that many of the worst impressions of opponents are miscalibrated, opportunities to interact with opponents could help correct misconceptions. However, affective polarization fosters distrust and avoidance of opponents [2,3], which may ironically foreclose the opportunity to disconfirm misperceptions as people become more and more likely to keep their distance. Third, we speculate that this polarized environment — perhaps especially online — selects for and rewards actors who are willing to express **extreme** and **outrageous views** [54]. More moderate partisans may be **repelled** by this polarized landscape and **hesitate to publicly voice dissent**. If this form of self-silencing occurs, it leaves public space to be filled — and public impressions formed — primarily by **those on the extremes**. Rising elite political polarization has been implicated as a **threat to democracy** [4,5] and can **impede effective action on some of the world’s most urgent problems** [9,57]. The current review considers causes and consequences of rising polarization (real and illusory) among the general public. If the public polarizes further, political and media elites will have **even greater incentives to fuel the division**. Although party disagreement is an essential part of the political process, polarization and animosity based on misconceptions of the other side threatens to misdiagnose problems, leading people to battle imagined enemies and distracting from opportunities for transformative reform [58].

#### Preserving a US-led democratic order is key to solve a litany of existential threats through international cooperation.

Kasparov ’17 (Garry Kasparov; Chairman of the Human Rights Foundation and author of Winter Is Coming: Why Vladimir Putin and the Enemies of the Free World Must Be Stopped; published 2-6-2017; “Democracy and Human Rights: The Case for U.S. Leadership”; <https://www.foreign.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/021617_Kasparov_%20Testimony.pdf>; accessed 8-23-2020; Elkins AM)

The Soviet Union was an existential threat, and this focused the attention of the world, and the American people. There existential threat today is not found on a map, but it is very real. The forces of the past are making steady progress against the modern world order. Terrorist movements in the Middle East, extremist parties across Europe, a paranoid tyrant in North Korea threatening nuclear blackmail, and, at the center of the web, an aggressive KGB dictator in Russia. They all want to turn the world back to a dark past because their survival is threatened by the values of the free world, epitomized by the United States. And they are thriving as the U.S. has retreated. The global freedom index has declined for ten consecutive years. No one like to talk about the United States as a global policeman, but this is what happens when there is no cop on the beat. American leadership begins at home, right here. America cannot lead the world on democracy and human rights if there is no unity on the meaning and importance of these things. Leadership is required to make that case clearly and powerfully. Right now, Americans are engaged in politics at a level not seen in decades. It is an opportunity for them to rediscover that making America great begins with believing America can be great. The Cold War was won on American values that were shared by both parties and nearly every American. Institutions that were created by a Democrat, Truman, were triumphant forty years later thanks to the courage of a Republican, Reagan. This bipartisan consistency created the decades of strategic stability that is the great strength of democracies. Strong institutions that outlast politicians allow for long-range planning. In contrast, dictators can operate only tactically, not strategically, because they are not constrained by the balance of powers, but cannot afford to think beyond their own survival. This is why a dictator like Putin has an advantage in chaos, the ability to move quickly. This can only be met by strategy, by long-term goals that are based on shared values, not on polls and cable news. The fear of making things worse has paralyzed the United States from trying to make things better. There will always be setbacks, but the United States cannot quit. The spread of democracy is the only proven remedy for nearly every crisis that plagues the world today. War, famine, poverty, terrorism–all are generated and exacerbated by authoritarian regimes. A policy of America First inevitably puts American security last. American leadership is required because there is no one else, and because it is good for America. There is no weapon or wall that is more powerful for security than America being envied, imitated, and admired around the world. Admired not for being perfect, but for having the exceptional courage to always try to be better. Thank you.

#### Bipartisan consensus is key to solve climate change—it’s try or die.

Eberhart ’20 (Dan Eberhart; Dan Eberhart is CEO of Canary, LLC.; published 2-13-2020; "The Real Political Divide: Do We Solve Climate Change With American Ingenuity Or More Government Regulation?"; https://www.forbes.com/sites/daneberhart/2020/02/13/economic-growth-defines-climate-change-divide-between-republicans-and-democrats/#13d8d6a423ba; accessed 10-1-2020; Elkins AM)

That’s unfortunate, not only because climate change legislation **has to be bipartisan** to make it through the Senate and survive future administrations, but also because Republicans have **good ideas** that are too often **dismissed** by climate activists and social justice champions. Senate Republicans have been **leaders** on this front for some time, introducing bills to increase the use of proven low-carbon energy sources, supporting energy efficiency and accelerating the commercialization of advanced energy technologies like carbon capture, marine energy and grid-scale storage. In the House, Republicans are beginning to roll out proposals focused on innovation and nature-based solutions, such as planting 1 trillion trees by 2050 to absorb carbon. Republicans are also working to reduce plastic pollution in the oceans, make our communities more resilient to severe weather activity, and extend tax credits for industrial carbon capture technology. Republicans also support efforts to **expand renewable energy deployment** by reducing the regulatory roadblocks that often delay projects to the point where they’re no longer economically viable. Streamlining the regulatory universe is an approach even President [Trump supports](https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-president-trump-proposed-national-environmental-policy-act-regulations/). The common denominators among the Republican efforts to address climate change are a faith in competitive free markets, American ingenuity and incentives. Call it a zero-harm approach. To see Republican ideas in action, [look no further than Texas](https://www.dallasnews.com/business/energy/2018/01/30/can-you-harness-the-wind-texas-can-way-better-than-everyone-else/), which put incentives in place under then-Gov. George W. Bush for the development of wind power and threw open its power market to competition. As a result, [Texas leads the nation in wind capacity](https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=40252). Compare Texas to the Northeast where energy infrastructure projects – both [pipelines](https://nypost.com/2019/09/12/cuomos-war-on-pipelines-means-pain-for-little-people/) and [wind farms](https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/major-u-s-offshore-wind-projects-still-face-hurdles/) – continue to be blocked for ideological or NIMBY reasons. If Congress is serious about addressing climate change, Democrats and Republicans will **have to work together** on to craft a consensus package. They should start with the best of the ideas currently on the table. Uneconomic and simply punitive measures should be discarded, but that would leave plenty of good ideas that are market based and realistic. Plenty of Republicans see climate change as a **serious issue** but don’t believe gambling with our national security or restricting personal freedoms are appropriate responses. Dismissing Republicans as “deniers” or insisting climate change is a crisis that requires conservatives to abandon their principles, won’t move us **any closer** to **achievable** and **sustainable** solutions.

#### Warming causes *extinction*—turns every impact AND their models under-estimate it.

Spratt & Dunlop ’19 (David Spratt and Ian Dunlop; David Spratt is a Research Director for Breakthrough National Centre for Climate Restoration, Melbourne, and co-author of *Climate Code Red: The case for emergency action*; Ian T. Dunlop is a member of the Club of Rome. Formerly an international oil, gas and coal industry executive, chairman of the Australian Coal Association, chief executive of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and chair of the Australian Greenhouse Office Experts Group on Emissions Trading 1998-2000; published May 2019; “Existential climate-related security risk: A scenario approach”; <https://52a87f3e-7945-4bb1-abbf-9aa66cd4e93e.filesusr.com/ugd/148cb0_90dc2a2637f348edae45943a88da04d4.pdf>; accessed 10-9-2020; Elkins AM)

Climate change intersects with pre-existing national security risks to function as a threat multiplier and accelerant to instability, contributing to escalating cycles of humanitarian and socio-political crises, conflict and forced migration. Climate-change impacts on food and water systems, declining crop yields and rising food prices driven by drought, wildfire and harvest failures have already become catalysts for social breakdown and conflict across the Middle East, the Maghreb and the Sahel, contributing to the European migration crisis. Understanding and foreseeing such events depends crucially on an appreciation of the real strengths and limitations of climate-science projections, and the application of risk-management frameworks which differ fundamentally from conventional practice. SCIENTIFIC RETICENCE Climate scientists may err on the side of “least drama”, whose causes may include adherence to the scientific norms of restraint, objectivity and skepticism, and may underpredict or down-play future climate changes. In 2007, security analysts warned that, in the two previous decades, scientific predictions in the climate-change arena had consistently under-estimated the severity of what actually transpired. 3 This problem persists, notably in the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), whose Assessment Reports exhibit a one-sided reliance on general climate models, which incorporate important climate processes, but do not include all of the processes that can contribute to system feedbacks, compound extreme events, and abrupt and/or irreversible changes. 4 Other forms of knowledge are downplayed, including paleoclimatology, expert advice, and semi-empirical models. IPCC reports present detailed, quantified, complex modelling results, but then briefly note more severe, non- linear, system-change possibilities in a descriptive, non-quantified form. Because policymakers and the media are often drawn to headline numbers, this approach results in less attention being given to the most devastating, difficult-to-quantify outcomes. In one example, the IPCC’s Fifth Assessment Report in 2014 projected a sea-level rise of 0.55-0.82 metre by 2100, but said “levels above the likely range cannot be reliably evaluated”. By way of comparison, the higher of two US Department of Defence scenarios is a two-metre rise by 2100, and the “extreme” scenario developed by a number of US government agencies is 2.5 metres by 2100. 5 Another example is the recent IPCC 1.5°C report, which projected that warming would continue at the current rate of 0.2°C per decade and reach the 1.5°C mark around 2040. However the 1.5°C boundary is likely to be passed in half that time, around 2030, and the 2°C boundary around 2045, due to accelerating anthropogenic emissions, decreased aerosol loading and changing ocean circulation conditions.6 EXISTENTIAL RISK An existential risk to civilisation is one posing permanent large negative consequences to humanity which may never be undone, either annihilating intelligent life or permanently and drastically curtailing its potential. With the commitments by nations to the 2015 Paris Agreement, the current path of warming is 3°C or more by 2100. But this figure does not include “long-term” carbon-cycle feedbacks, which are materially relevant now and in the near future due to the unprecedented rate at which human activity is perturbing the climate system. Taking these into account, the Paris path would lead to around 5°C of warming by 2100. 7 Scientists warn that warming of 4°C is incompatible with an organised global community, is devastating to the majority of ecosystems, and has a high probability of not being stable. The World Bank says it may be “beyond adaptation”. But an existential threat may also exist for many peoples and regions at a significantly lower level of warming. In 2017, 3°C of warming was categorised as “catastrophic” with a warning that, on a path of unchecked emissions, low-probability, high-impact warming could be catastrophic by 2050. 9 The Emeritus Director of the Potsdam Institute, Prof. Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, warns that “climate change is now reaching the end-game, where very soon humanity must choose between taking unprecedented action, or accepting that it has been left too late and bear the consequences.” He says that if we continue down the present path “there is a very big risk that we will just end our civilisation. The human species will survive somehow but we will destroy almost everything we have built up over the last two thousand years.” 11 Unfortunately, conventional risk and probability analysis becomes useless in these circumstances because it excludes the full implications of outlier events and possibilities lurking at the fringes.12 Prudent risk-management means a tough, objective look at the real risks to which we are exposed, especially at those “fat-tail” events, which may have consequences that are damaging beyond quantification, and threaten the survival of human civilisation. Global warming projections display a “fat-tailed” distribution with a greater likelihood of warming that is well in excess of the average amount of warming predicted by climate models, and are of a higher probability than would be expected under typical statistical assumptions. More importantly, the risk lies disproportionately in the “fat-tail” outcomes, as illustrated in Figure 1. This is a particular concern with potential climate tipping-points — passing critical thresholds which result in step changes in the climate system that will be irreversible on human timescales — such as the polar ice sheets (and hence sea levels), permafrost and other carbon stores, where the impacts of global warming are non-linear and difficult to model with current scientific knowledge. Recently, attention has been given to a “hothouse Earth” scenario, in which system feedbacks and their mutual interaction could drive the Earth System climate to a point of no return, whereby further warming would become self-sustaining. This “hothouse Earth” planetary threshold could exist at a temperature rise as low as 2°C, possibly even lower.13

## 1AC – Corruption

#### Corruption is on the rise now, especially in democracies.

Al Jazeera 1/25 (Al Jazeera; published 1-25-2022; "Corruption is on the rise and pummeling human rights: New report"; https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/1/25/corruption-is-on-the-rise-and-pummeling-human-rights-new-report; accessed 2-23-2022; Elkins AM)

The **COVID-19** pandemic has been used in many countries as an **excuse** to **curtail basic freedoms** and **sidestep important checks and balances**, according to a new report that stresses the need to accelerate the fight against corruption to uphold human rights and democracy. The annual Corruption Perceptions Index from Transparency International warns that “**human rights and democracy across the world are under assault**.” The Berlin-based nongovernmental organisation surveys business leaders and experts to assign scores to 180 countries and territories on their perceived levels of public sector corruption. Using a scale from 0 to 100 (with 100 being very clean and 0 ranking as highly corrupt), the 10th annual report found that **two-thirds of countries scored below 50**. The average score was 43 out of 100. Overall, the fight against corruption is having **mixed results** – with some nations making gains and others falling behind. “Since 2012, 25 countries significantly improved their scores, but in the same period 23 countries significantly declined,” the report said. It also found that despite increased momentum to end the abuse of anonymous shell companies, many **high-scoring countries** with relatively clean public sectors **continue to enable corruption**. A shell company does not have a physical location, employees, products or revenue. It is used to store money, help facilitate tax avoidance and, in some cases, deal in illegal activity such as money laundering. Some high-ranking countries such as Switzerland have been called tax havens in part due to their tolerance of shell companies. **But corruption is not merely measured in dollars and cents**, the report notes. Financial corruption sp**ills over** into **law enforcement** and the **judiciary**, which could lead to impunity for serious crimes. **Human rights suffer as a result**. This year, highly corrupt countries accounted for almost all murders of human rights defenders around the world. Western Europe and the European Union came in as the highest-scoring, least corrupt region with a score of 66 out of 100. Sub-Saharan Africa had the lowest score, with 33 out of 100. Ranking in the top tier with a score of 88 were Denmark, Finland and New Zealand. Norway, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Germany rounded out the top 10. Still, despite **pledges** and **promises** on paper to **fight corruption**, Transparency International found that **131 countries out of 180 made no progress towards combating corruption over the last decade**. South Sudan, Syria and Somalia ranked at the bottom of the index. Countries in the grips of conflict or under authoritarian rule scored near the bottom, including Venezuela, Yemen, North Korea, Afghanistan, Libya, Equatorial Guinea and Turkmenistan. The Middle East and North Africa region, which got a score of 39 out of 100 for the fourth consecutive year, is struggling to fight corruption, according to the report. “Systemic political misconduct and private interests overtaking the common good have allowed the region – already devastated by various conflicts – to be ravaged by corruption and human rights abuses during the COVID-19 pandemic,” the report said. Transparency International is urging people everywhere to demand that their governments do more to hold power to account. Since the coronavirus pandemic struck in early 2020, governments around the world have either **spent** or **earmarked trillions of dollars** to **stimulate their economies** and **keep struggling businesses and households afloat**. The report stressed that governments must be as transparent as possible in showing how and where the funds are spent. Transparency International also stressed that governments, in developed and developing countries alike, must roll back disproportionate restrictions on freedoms of expression and assembly introduced since the beginning of the pandemic. The pandemic cannot be used as an excuse for corrupt activities, the report added, while agencies and institutions that hold power to account must operate independently and be empowered to detect corruption and do something about it. Moreover, governments in rich nations must be held accountable for their role in fostering transnational crime, the report said, which requires closing legal loopholes and ensuring that the corrupt do not escape justice.

#### Media advocacy allows government corruption to go unchecked—they’re in the government’s pocket.

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The U.S. press, like the U.S. government, is a **corrupt** and **troubled** institution. Corrupt not so much in the sense that it accepts bribes but in a **systemic sense**. It fails to do what it **claims to do**, what it **should do**, and what **society expects it to do**. The news media and the government are entwined in a **vicious circle** of **mutual manipulation**, **mythmaking**, and **self-interest**. Journalists need crises to dramatize news, and government officials need to appear to be responding to crises. Too often, the crises are not really crises but joint fabrications. The two institutions have become so ensnared in a **symbiotic web of lies** that the news media are **unable to tell the public what is true** and the government is **unable to govern effectively**. That is the thesis advanced by Paul H. Weaver, a former political scientist (at Harvard University), journalist (at Fortune magazine), and corporate communications executive (at Ford Motor Company), in his provocative analysis entitled News and the Culture of Lying: How Journalism Really Works. Take, for example, the long effort in the 1980s to eliminate the federal deficit, centered on the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Amendment. For several years, newspapers, magazines, and television newscasts ran hundreds of stories on the debates over Gramm-Rudman, the views of all sorts of experts on the **urgent need for deficit reduction**, and the eventual enactment of the legislation. Politicians postured—and were described—as working diligently to get a grip on the deficit. Anyone who read a newspaper or watched television news received the message that Congress and the Reagan administration were **heroically** and **painfully struggling** to contain government spending and reduce the deficit. Behind the smoke screen, however, congressional committees and federal officials were **increasing spending** and **adding new programs** in the routine annual budgeting and appropriations processes. When journalists reported on a new program, they usually characterized it as good news—the government tackling another problem—rather than as an addition to the budget and the deficit. Journalists **conspired with politicians** to create an image of a government fighting to end the deficit crisis, but they **ignored the routine procedures that increased the deficit**. As a result, Weaver writes, “**there were no news stories about government adding to the deficit even though that was what was happening**.” The news media and the government have created a **charade** that **serves their own interests** but **misleads the public**. Officials oblige the media’s need for drama by **fabricating crises** and **stage-managing their responses**, thereby **enhancing their own prestige and power**. Journalists **dutifully report those fabrications**. Both parties know the articles are self-aggrandizing manipulations and fail to inform the public about the more complex but boring issues of government policy and activity. What has emerged, Weaver argues, is a **culture of lying**. “The culture of lying,” he writes, “is the discourse and behavior of officials seeking to enlist the powers of journalism in support of their goals, and of journalists seeking to co-opt public and private officials into their efforts to find and cover stories of crisis and emergency response. It is the medium through which we Americans conduct most of our public business (and a lot of our private business) these days.” The result, he says, is a distortion of the constitutional role of government into an institution that must continually resolve or appear to resolve crises; it functions in “a new and powerful permanent emergency mode of operation.” The architect of the transformation was not a political leader or a constitutional convention but Joseph Pulitzer, who in 1883 bought the sleepy New York World and in 20 years made it the country’s largest newspaper. Pulitzer accomplished that by bringing drama to news—by turning news articles into stories with a plot, actors in conflict, and colorful details. In the late nineteenth century, most newspaper accounts of government actions were couched in institutional formats, much like the minutes of a board meeting and about as interesting. Pulitzer turned them into stories with a sharp dramatic focus that both implied and aroused intense public interest. Most newspapers of the time looked like the front page of the Wall Street Journal still does. Pulitzer made stories dramatic by adding blaring headlines, big pictures, and eye-catching graphics. His journalism took events out of their dry, institutional contexts and made them emotional rather than rational, immediate rather than considered, and sensational rather than informative. The press became a stage on which the actions of government were a series of dramas. Pulitzer’s journalism has become a model for the multistage theater of recent decades. The rise of television has increased the demand for drama in news, and the explosion in lobbyists and special-interest groups has expanded the number of actors and the range of conflicts. Business had to learn to play the game as well. Indeed, in recent decades, roughly since the founding of the Business Roundtable in the late 1970s, many companies have become adept at promoting the version of reality they want the public and government officials to believe. Weaver himself was hired at Ford as, in effect, a corporate propagandist. Companies now routinely use persuasion and image making, whether to attract political allies through philanthropy (Philip Morris Companies), to promote their economic interests (Mobil Oil Corporation), or to deflect critics of their products and processes (McDonald’s Corporation). As a result, business has become a prominent player in the manipulation of perception and in the corruption of the public policy process. Weaver recounts that during his years at Ford, executives were given scripts before being interviewed by journalists to ensure that they would make the points the company wished to make: “They were literally performing.” What the scripts said was almost never what people in the company really thought but what Ford wanted the media, the government, and the public to think. When President Jimmy Carter asked the 400 largest corporations to limit wage and price increases to contain inflation in 1978, most Ford Motor executives were cynical and thought the move would make inflation worse. But that isn’t what they said. Ford issued a statement welcoming the president’s initiative and endorsing its goal. The company noted that, although its own pricing plans called for increases greater than the president’s guidelines, it supported his program. Ford’s image makers decided that it would be politically dangerous to oppose the anti-inflation effort publicly and hoped that the company’s seeming support would help restrain its suppliers from increasing prices and its workers from demanding higher wages. Ford’s statement itself was a cynical lie. At Ford, Weaver learned that news often has a dual identity, an external façade and an internal reality, much like the Japanese duality of tatemae (appearance) and honne (reality). “On the surface there was a made-up public story put out for the purpose of manipulating others in ways favorable to the story makers,” he writes. “Behind that was another story, known to those immediately involved and to outsiders with the knowledge to decode it, concerning the making of the public story and the private objectives it was meant to advance. The two stories, or realities, were often wildly at odds with each other. In the real world, the role of the press was to promote public illusions and private privilege.” The press corrupts **itself**, the **public policy process**, and the **public’s perceptions**, Weaver argues, when it seeks out and propagates dueling cover stories, with their drama, conflict, and quotable advocates, but **fails** to discover or report the **underlying realities**. **The press prints the news but not the truth**. It reports in detail the competing propaganda of the conflicting interests but largely neglects the substance of the issue in conflict. A recent example is the coverage of the health care debate. The Media Research Center studied the television networks’ evening newscasts between June 15 and July 15, 1994. Of the 68 reports on health care reform, 56 focused on political aspects, and only 12 dealt with the economic or individual impacts of various proposals, as reported in the Wall Street Journal. The media’s practice of focusing on the manipulators and their machinations rather than on substantive issues is perhaps unavoidable because it reflects several aspects of American culture. Personalities are more compelling than institutions, facts are often uncertain, attention spans (and television sound bites) are brief, and simplification—often oversimplification—is the norm. But the media’s focus on façades has several consequences. One is that **news can change perceptions**, and **perceptions often become reality**. Adverse leaks or innuendos about a government official often lead to his or her **loss of influence**, **resignation**, or **dismissal**. The stock market is also fertile ground for planted stories. Rumors or allegations spread by short sellers often drive a stock’s price down. There may be nothing wrong with either the official’s performance or the stock’s value, but the willingness of the press to report innuendos and rumors as news **changes reality**. The subjects of such reports, which are usually fabrications created by opponents, must be prepared to defend themselves instantly. The mere appearance of a disparaging report in the press changes perceptions and, unless effectively rebutted, will change reality and the truth. That is why government officials and politicians—and, increasingly, companies and other institutions—pay as much attention to communications as to policy. Indeed, much of what appears in the newspapers as business news is nothing more than corporate propaganda. When I was an executive at a large public-relations agency, I was often amused to observe how many of the stories in the Wall Street Journal and the business section of the New York Times were essentially news releases the agency had issued the previous day. On some days, most of the stories were clearly identifiable as coming—some nearly word for word—from announcements by corporations or government agencies. In an environment in which perceptions can quickly affect policy, companies need to be as alert and aggressive as politicians, government officials, and other interest groups are in ensuring that their positions are favorably represented in the media. New technology can often help them respond quickly to challenges, accusations, or misstatements. An incident that happened when I managed communications for a large global bank illustrates the ability of organizations to influence the presentation of news and hence the perceptions of the public and of government officials. A Wall Street Journal reporter finished interviewing bank officials on a complex and sensitive matter at about 5 p.m. in New York City. Three hours later, at 8 a.m. in Hong Kong, his story appeared in the Journal’s Asian edition. The bank’s Hong Kong office faxed us the story, which had interpreted our position somewhat unfavorably. My office promptly called the Journal’s copy desk in New York City to clarify the bank’s position. A more favorable account appeared the next morning in the newspaper’s European and U.S. editions. One consequence of the prevalence of propaganda in the press is that **the public’s confidence in all institutions gradually erodes**. As people begin to realize that they are being misled, manipulated, and lied to, they resent it. From 1973 to 1993, **only Congress fell further in public esteem than the press**, according to surveys of public confidence by the University of Michigan. The decline in confidence reflects a widening feeling that the news media are **contentious**, **unfair**, **inaccurate**, and **under the thumb of powerful institutions**, a 1989 survey by Gallup for the Times-Mirror Center for the People and the Press concluded.

#### That kills economic growth—it’s even worse in democracies.

Weber ’08 (Weber, James. “The Impact of Corruption on Economic Growth: Does Government Matter?” Academy of Management Perspectives, vol. 22, no. 4, 2008, pp. 80–82. JSTOR, JSTOR, ([www.jstor.org/stable/27747481)//BWSLE](http://www.jstor.org/stable/27747481)//BWSLE) recut Elkins AM)

Corruption has been the focus of business ethicists and international management scholars for years. That should come as no surprise, as paying off corrupt government officials appears to be an inevitable ritual for business leaders operating globally, especially in many developing countries. But do we really know what conditions cause this corrupt behavior? For instance, are bad governments the reason corruption exists in a country, and can good governments minimize or eliminate the practice? What are the consequences for a country's economic development when corruption is present? And if corruption is somehow diminished, does this spur economic growth, and what conditions (e.g., does it depend on the quality of government)? In their recent study, **Toke Aidt** of the **University of Cambridge**, **Jayasri Dutta** of the **University of Birmingham**, and **Vania Sena** of **Aston University** tried to answer these important questions. The results from their investigation hold some surprises and provide guidance for scholars and global business leaders alike. In particular, Aidt, Dutta, and Sena focused on political accountability? basically, the extent to which a society can hold political leaders accountable for their actions while in office. In doing so, they examined three key issues. The first two revolved around whether political accountability plays a role in determining whether corruption exists and, if so, to what degree. Third was the question of whether political accountability has an impact on a country's economic growth. Interestingly, while such questions have been examined in prior studies to various degrees, Aidt, Dutta, and Sena are unique in suggesting that a simple linear relationship may not exist between corruption and economic growth. Instead, they used an approach that assessed **nonlinear threshold effects** across different levels of government quality when looking at the relationship between **corruption** and **economic growth**. Indeed, political accountability is understood as being either high or low depending on the quality of the government in power. A high-quality government allows citizens to use the threat of replacing the current government leaders to reduce corruption. In addition, economic growth can reduce corruption by improving the incentives available for the government leaders. On the other hand, low-quality governments are found when institutions are deficient, and citizens cannot control or easily dispose of their leaders. In this case, Aidt, Dutta, and Sena argued, corruption will be at the highest level, and growth will no longer have an ameliorative impact on the level of corruption. In essence, when low-quality governments are in power, corruption is basically uncontrollable? Either by the country's citizens or through the effects of economic growth. Using a complex series of analyses, Aidt, Dutta, and Sena found results that were largely consistent with their expectations. Specifically, their results showed that when a high-quality political regime is in power, **corruption has a negative impact on growth**. Put another way, corruption does the **most damage** when **governments are good**. In contrast, when a low-quality political regime is in power, corruption basically has no impact on economic growth (possibly because citizens maneuver around corruption by engaging more heavily in the informal economy). Moreover, any economic growth that does occur has little or no ability to reduce corruption when low-quality governments hold sway. What is particularly impressive about Aidt, Dutta, and Sena's study is the scope of their investigation. They examined political regimes from **more than 70 countries** across **five continents** based on countries' **short-term** (1995 to 2000) and **long-term** (1970 to 2000) **economic growth** in **real gross domestic product** (GDP) **per capita**. To determine the level of corruption practiced in each country, Aidt, Dutta, and Sena relied on Transparency International's Perceived Corruption Index and part of the World Bank's Governance Matters database. It's also important to note that Aidt, Dutta, and Sena found that countries with a high-quality political regime had higher economic growth and lower corruption than countries weak in their political accountability. Indeed, a **one-point reduction in corruption** was associated with an **increase in economic growth** of a country's GDP over **both the short and long run**? When good governments were in place. As Aidt, Dutta, and Sena pointed out, if Brazil, a country with corruption problems, had been able to reduce its corruption to the level of one of the least corrupt countries (e.g., Denmark), it's likely that growth rates would have been higher. Indeed, Aidt, Dutta, and Sena estimated that the growth rate of Brazil would have been more than three times higher during the late 1990s and almost twice as high overall from 1970 to 2000 with a lower level of corruption. Aidt, Dutta, and Sena offered international business leaders some important insights. They underscored that the impact of efforts to understand and control uncomfortable, if not illegal, requests for bribery and other forms of corruption depends, at least in part, on the quality of the political regime in the country where you are doing business. Their results highlighted a **self reinforcing relationship** between **corruption** and **economic growth**, one that **amplifies** the **negative impact** of corruption on growth in societies where institutional quality exceeds a certain threshold such that good government exists. In societies where the quality of the institutions falls short of this threshold (i.e., where bad governments hold sway), this amplifying effect is absent. Surprisingly, when political institutions are weak, there is no relationship between corruption and economic growth. Aidt, Dutta, and Sena theorized that this may be a "greasing the wheel" effect. In other words, corruption may improve efficiency in these countries by encouraging individuals to circumvent the worst institutional deficiencies in the economy: bad government officials. The result may be to increase the informal economy, though teasing out these issues remains a challenge for future research. So, in the final analysis, what is the impact of corruption? Corruption seems to have a negative effect on economic growth when quality governments are in charge? or, to put it positively, **when corruption is reduced**, good governments can **significantly improve** their **national economic growth**.

#### A prolonged economic crisis escalates to a large-scale global conflict—lack of reforms, high inequality, and isolationism.

Liu ’18 (Qian Liu; China-based economist; published 11-11-2018; "From economic crisis to World War III"; https://www.neweurope.eu/article/from-economic-crisis-to-world-war-iii; accessed 3-9-2021; Elkins AM)

The next economic crisis is closer than you think. But what you should really worry about is what comes after: in the current **social**, **political**, and **technological landscape**, a **prolonged economic crisis**, combined with **rising income inequality**, could**well escalate** into a **major global military conflict**. The 2008-09 global financial crisis almost bankrupted governments and caused systemic collapse. Policymakers managed to pull the global economy back from the brink, using massive monetary stimulus, including quantitative easing and near-zero (or even negative) interest rates. But monetary stimulus is like an adrenaline shot to jump-start an arrested heart; it can revive the patient, but it does nothing to cure the disease. Treating a sick economy requires **structural reforms**, which can cover everything from **financial** and **labour markets** to **tax systems**, **fertility patterns**, and **education policies**. Policymakers have **utterly failed** to pursue such reforms, despite promising to do so. Instead, they have remained preoccupied with politics. From Italy to Germany, forming and sustaining governments now seems to take more time than actual governing. Greece, for example, has relied on money from international creditors to keep its head (barely) above water, rather than genuinely reforming its pension system or improving its business environment. The **lack of structural reform** has meant that the **unprecedented excess liquidity** that central banks injected into their economies **was not allocated** to its **most efficient uses**. Instead, it **raised global asset prices** to levels **even higher** than those prevailing **before 2008**. In the United States, housing prices are now 8% higher than they were at the peak of the property bubble in 2006, according to the property website Zillow. The price-to-earnings (CAPE) ratio, which measures whether stock-market prices are within a reasonable range, is now higher than it was both in 2008 and at the start of the Great Depression in 1929. As monetary tightening reveals the vulnerabilities in the real economy, the collapse of asset-price bubbles will trigger another economic crisis – one that could be even more severe than the last, because we have built up a tolerance to our strongest macroeconomic medications. A decade of regular adrenaline shots, in the form of ultra-low interest rates and unconventional monetary policies, has **severely depleted** their power to **stabilise** and **stimulate** the economy. If history is any guide, the consequences of this mistake could extend far beyond the economy. According to Harvard’s Benjamin Friedman, **prolonged periods** of **economic distress** have been characterised also by **public antipathy** toward **minority groups** or **foreign countries** – attitudes that can help to fuel **unrest**, **terrorism**, or even**war**. For example, during the Great Depression, US President Herbert Hoover signed the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, intended to protect American workers and farmers from foreign competition. In the subsequent five years, global trade shrank by two-thirds. Within a decade, World War II had begun. To be sure, WWII, like World War I, was caused by a multitude of factors; there is no standard path to war. But there is reason to believe that **high levels** of **inequality** can play a **significant role** in **stoking conflict**. According to research by the economist Thomas Piketty, a spike in income inequality is often followed by a great crisis. Income inequality then declines for a while, before rising again, until a new peak – and a new disaster. Though causality has yet to be proven, given the limited number of data points, this correlation **should not be taken lightly**, especially with wealth and income inequality at historically high levels. This is all the more worrying in view of the numerous other factors stoking social unrest and diplomatic tension, including technological disruption, a record-breaking migration crisis, anxiety over globalisation, political polarisation, and rising nationalism. All are symptoms of failed policies that could turn out to be trigger points for a future crisis. Voters have good reason to be frustrated, but the emotionally appealing populists to whom they are increasingly giving their support are offering ill-advised solutions that will only make matters worse. For example, despite the world’s **unprecedented interconnectedness**, **multilateralism** is **increasingly being eschewed**, as countries – most notably, Donald J. Trump’s US – pursue unilateral, isolationist policies. Meanwhile, proxy wars are raging in Syria and Yemen. Against this background, we must take seriously the possibility that the next economic crisis could lead to a large-scale military confrontation. By the logic of the political scientist Samuel Huntington, considering such a scenario could help us avoid it because it would force us to take action. In this case, the key will be for policymakers to pursue the structural reforms that they have long promised while replacing finger-pointing and antagonism with a sensible and respectful global dialogue. The alternative may well be global conflagration.

#### Nuclear war causes extinction—famine, fallout, and Ice Age.

Starr ’15 (Steven Starr; Steven is an Associate member of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation and has been published by the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists. His writings appear on the websites of PSR, the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology Center for Arms Control, Energy and Environmental Studies, Scientists for Global Responsibility, and the International Network of Scientists Against Proliferation. From 2007 through 2011, he worked with the governments of Switzerland, Chile, and New Zealand, in support of their efforts at the United Nations to eliminate thousands of high-alert, launch-ready nuclear weapons. Mr. Starr is also an expert on the environmental consequences of nuclear war, and in 2011, he made an address to the U.N. First Committee describing the dangers that nuclear weapons and nuclear war poses to all nations and peoples. He has made presentations to Ministry Officials, Parliamentarians, Universities, citizens and students from around the world, and specializes in making technical scientific information understandable to all audiences.; published 2-28-2015; "Nuclear War: An Unrecognized Mass Extinction Event Waiting To Happen"; https://ratical.org/radiation/NuclearExtinction/StevenStarr022815.html; Elkins AM)

A war fought with 21st century strategic nuclear weapons would be **more than just a great catastrophe** in human history. If we allow it to happen, such a war would be a **mass extinction event** that [**ends human history**](https://ratical.org/radiation/NuclearExtinction/StarrNuclearWinterOct09.pdf). There is a profound difference between extinction and “an unprecedented disaster,” or even “the end of civilization,” because even after such an immense catastrophe, human life would go on. But extinction, by definition, is an event of **utter finality**, and a nuclear war that could cause human extinction should really be considered as the **ultimate criminal act**. It certainly would be the crime to end all crimes. The world’s leading climatologists now tell us that nuclear war **threatens our continued existence** as a species. Their studies predict that a large nuclear war, especially one fought with strategic nuclear weapons, would create a post-war environment in which for many years it would be **too cold and dark to even grow food**. Their findings make it clear that not only humans, but most large animals and many other forms of complex life would likely **vanish forever** in a nuclear darkness of our own making. The environmental consequences of nuclear war would attack the ecological support systems of life at **every level**. Radioactive fallout, produced not only by nuclear bombs, but also by the destruction of nuclear power plants and their spent fuel pools, would **poison the biosphere**. Millions of tons of smoke would act to **destroy Earth’s protective ozone layer** and **block most sunlight** from reaching Earth’s surface, creating **Ice Age weather conditions** that would **last for decades**. Yet the political and military leaders who control nuclear weapons strictly avoid any direct public discussion of the consequences of nuclear war. They do so by arguing that nuclear weapons are not intended to be used, but only to deter. Remarkably, the leaders of the Nuclear Weapon States have chosen to ignore the authoritative, long-standing scientific research done by the climatologists, research that predicts virtually **any nuclear war**, fought with **even a fraction** of the operational and deployed nuclear arsenals, will leave the Earth **essentially uninhabitable**.

## 1AC – Plan

#### In a democracy, a free press ought to prioritize objectivity over advocacy.

#### Objectivity in journalism is fact-based, non-subjective reporting.

McLaughlin ’16 (Greg McLaughlin; Greg McLaughlin is an Associate of the Centre for Media Research at Ulster University; published 2016; "Journalism, Objectivity and War from The War Correspondent on JSTOR"; https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt19qgf0x.7; accessed 2-22-2022; Elkins AM)

Objectivity in journalism has come under serious critique from academics (Glasgow University Media Group, 1976; Lichtenberg, 1996; Streckfuss, 1990; Parenti, 1993). They suggest in various ways that the news media do not simply report and reflect our social world but that they more or less play an active part in shaping, even constructing it; that they represent sectional interests rather than society as a whole.2 When these criticisms are leveled at journalists, their traditional defence is their practice of objectivity but what does it mean to be objective in journalism in the first place? According to Michael Schudson (1978), objectivity is based on the assumption that a series of ‘facts’ or truth claims about the world can be validated by the rules and procedures of a professional community. The distortions and biases, the subjective value judgements of the individual or of particular interest groups, are filtered out so that among journalists at any rate, ‘The belief in objectivity is a faith in “facts”, a distrust of “values”, and a commitment to their segregation’ (p. 6). Gaye Tuchman refers to this method as ‘a strategic ritual’, a method of newsgathering and reporting that protects the journalist from charges of bias or libel (1972, p. 661ff).

## 1AC – Framing

#### I value morality.

#### Pleasure and pain are the starting point for moral reasoning—they’re our most baseline desires and the only things that explain the intrinsic value of objects or actions

**Moen 16**, Ole Martin (PhD, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo). "An Argument for Hedonism." Journal of Value Inquiry 50.2 (2016): 267. SM

Let us start by observing, empirically, that **a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value** and disvalue **is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable**. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for **there is something undeniably good about** the way **pleasure** feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative. 2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, **I might ask: “What for**?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. **The reason is that** the **pleasure is not good for anything further**; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good. 3 As Aristotle observes: “**We never ask** [a man] **what** his **end is in being pleased, because we assume** that **pleasure is** choice **worthy in itself**.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that **if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad**. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that **pleasure** and pain are both places where we **reach the end of the line in matters of value**. Although pleasure and pain thus seem to be good candidates **for intrinsic value** and disvalue, several objections have been raised against this suggestion: (1) that pleasure and pain have instrumental but not intrinsic value/disvalue; (2) that pleasure and pain gain their value/disvalue derivatively, in virtue of satisfying/frustrating our desires; (3) that there is a subset of pleasures that are not intrinsically valuable (so-called “evil pleasures”) and a subset of pains that are not intrinsically disvaluable (so-called “noble pains”), and (4) that pain asymbolia, masochism, and practices such as wiggling a loose tooth render it implausible that pain is intrinsically disvaluable. I shall argue that these objections fail. Though it is, of course, an open question whether other objections to P1 might be more successful, I shall assume that if (1)–(4) fail, we are justified in believing that P1 is true itself a paragon of freedom—there will always be some agents able to interfere substantially with one’s choices. The effective level of protection one enjoys, and hence one’s actual degree of freedom, will vary according to multiple factors: how powerful one is, how powerful individuals in one’s vicinity are, how frequent police patrols are, and so on. Now, we saw above that what makes a slave unfree on Pettit’s view is the fact that his master has the power to interfere arbitrarily with his choices; in other words, what makes the slave unfree is the power relation that obtains between his master and him. The difﬁculty is that, in light of the facts I just mentioned, there is no reason to think that this power relation will be unique. A similar relation could obtain between the master and someone other than the slave: absent perfect state control, the master may very well have enough power to interfere in the lives of countless individuals. Yet it would be wrong to infer that these individuals lack freedom in the way the slave does; if they lack anything, it seems to be security. A problematic power relation can also obtain between the slave and someone other than the master, since there may be citizens who are more powerful than the master and who can therefore interfere with the slave’s choices at their discretion. Once again, it would be wrong to infer that these individuals make the slave unfree in the same way that the master does. Something appears to be missing from Pettit’s view. If I live in a particularly nasty part of town, then it may turn out that, when all the relevant factors are taken into account, I am just as vulnerable to outside interference as are the slaves in the royal palace, yet it does not follow that our conditions are equivalent from the point of view of freedom. As a matter of fact, we may be equally vulnerable to outside interference, but as a matter of right, our standings could not be more different. I have legal recourse against anyone who interferes with my freedom; the recourse may not be very effective—presumably it is not, if my overall vulnerability to outside interference is comparable to that of a slave— but I still have full legal standing.68 By contrast, the slave lacks legal recourse against the interventions of one speciﬁc individual: his master. It is that fact, on a Kantian view—a fact about the legal relation in which a slave stands to his master—that sets slaves apart from freemen. The point may appear trivial, but it does get something right: whereas one cannot identify a power relation that obtains uniquely between a slave and his master, the legal relation between them is undeniably unique. A master’s right to interfere with respect to his slave does not extend to freemen, regardless of how vulnerable they might be as a matter of fact, and citizens other than the master do not have the right to order the slave around, regardless of how powerful they might be. This suggests that Kant is correct in thinking that the ideal of freedom is essentially linked to a person’s having full legal standing. More speciﬁcally, he is correct in holding that the importance of rights is not exhausted by their contribution to the level of protection that an individual enjoys, as it must be on an instrumental view like Pettit’s. Although it does matter that rights be enforced with reasonable effectiveness, the sheer fact that one has adequate legal rights is essential to one’s standing as a free citizen. In this respect, Kant stays faithful to the idea that freedom is primarily a matter of standing—a standing that the freeman has and that the slave lacks. Pettit himself frequently insists on the idea, but he fails to do it justice when he claims that freedom is simply a matter of being adequately (and reliably) shielded against the strength of others. As Kant recognizes, the standing of a free citizen is a more complex matter than that. One could perhaps worry that the idea of legal standing is something of a red herring here—that it must ultimately be reducible to a complex network of power relations and, hence, that the position I attribute to Kant differs only nominally from Pettit’s. That seems to me doubtful. Viewing legal standing as essential to freedom makes sense only if our conception of the former includes conceptions of what constitutes a fully adequate scheme of legal rights, appropriate legal recourse, justiﬁed punishment, and so on. Only if one believes that these notions all boil down to power relations will Kant’s position appear similar to Pettit’s. On any other view—and certainly that includes most views recently defended by philosophers—the notion of legal standing will outstrip the power relations that ground Pettit’s theory.

#### Thus, the standard is maximizing expected well-being. Prefer additionally –

#### [1] All other frameworks collapse –

#### Actor specificity – only util solves tradeoffs because we aggregate based on consequences – outweighs since the res is a question of government obligations.

#### Lexical pre-requisite – focusing on extinction precludes all other ethics – you can’t uphold moral values if you’re dead.

#### [2] Framework defines what obligations are – that means it’s also a topicality issue, so we must theoretically defend our interpretation – I defend ought as the standard text. Prefer it:

#### Ground – all impacts function under util whereas other ethics flow to one side exclusively – makes util the fairest.

#### Topic ed – util forces debates about what happens in the real world because we must analyze consequences of the plan – increases topic ed because it forces research on the effects of the resolution – key to education because we use it in the real-world to talk about current topics. Outweighs phil ed – we can learn about Kant on other topics or at camp, but topical debate only happens now.

## 1AC – Underview

#### Aff gets RVIs – a) time skew – theory moots all 1AC offense and the 1AR isn't enough time to win on both substance and theory so the 2N collapse makes it impossible, and given bidirectional interps, theory is always a 2nd-off strategy for you, b) Reciprocity – otherwise theory is a NIB, c) checks bad theory.

#### Apocalyptic images challenge dominant power structures by contesting the implausibility that inequitable structures can produce catastrophe and generates the imagination to create futures of social justice outside of current narratives.

Hurley ’17 (Jessica Hurley, Assistant Professor in the Humanities at the University of Chicago, “Impossible Futures: Fictions of Risk in the Longue Durée”, Duke University Press, https://read.dukeupress.edu/american-literature/article/89/4/761/132823/Impossible-Futures-Fictions-of-Risk-in-the-Longue)

If contemporary ecocriticism has a shared premise about environmental risk it is that genre is the key to both perceiving and, possibly, correcting ecological crisis. Frederick Buell’s 2003 From Apocalypse to Way of Life: Environmental Crisis in the American Century has established one of the most central oppositions of this paradigm. As his title suggests, Buell tells the story of a discourse that began in the apocalyptic mode in the 1960s and 70s, when discussions of “the immanent end of nature” most commonly took the form of “prophecy, revelation, climax, and extermination” before turning away from apocalypse when the prophesied ends failed to arrive (112, 78). Buell offers his suggestion for the appropriate literary mode for life lived within a crisis that is both unceasing and inescapable: new voices, “if wise enough….will abandon apocalypse for a sadder realism that looks closely at social and environmental changes in process and recognizes crisis as a place where people dwell” (202-3). In a world of threat, Buell demands a realism that might help us see risks more clearly and aid our survival.¶ Buell’s argument has become a broadly held view in contemporary risk theory and ecocriticism, overlapping fields in the social sciences and humanities that address the foundational question of second modernity: “how do you live when you are at such risk?” (Woodward 2009, 205).1 Such an assertion, however, assumes both that realism is a neutral descriptive practice and that apocalypse is not something that is happening now in places that we might not see, or cannot hear. This essay argues for the continuing importance of apocalyptic narrative forms in representations of environmental risk to disrupt conservative realisms that maintain the status quo. Taking the ecological disaster of nuclear waste as my case study, I examine two fictional treatments of nuclear waste dumps that create different temporal structures within which the colonial history of the United States plays out. The first, a set of Department of Energy documents that use statistical modeling and fictional description to predict a set of realistic futures for the site of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico (1991), creates a present that is fully knowable and a future that is fully predictable. Such an approach, I suggest, perpetuates the state logics of implausibility that have long undergirded settler colonialism in the United States. In contrast, Leslie Marmon Silko’s contemporaneous novel Almanac of the Dead (1991) uses its apocalyptic form to deconstruct the claims to verisimilitude that undergird state realism, transforming nuclear waste into a prophecy of the end of the United States rather than a means for imagining its continuation. In Almanac of the Dead, the presence of nuclear waste introjects a deep-time perspective into contemporary America, transforming the present into a speculative space where environmental catastrophe produces not only unevenly distributed damage but also revolutionary forms of social justice that insist on a truth that probability modeling cannot contain: that the future will be unimaginably different from the present, while the present, too, might yet be utterly different from the real that we think we know.¶ Nuclear waste is rarely treated in ecocriticism or risk theory, for several reasons: it is too manmade to be ecological; its catastrophes are ongoing, intentionally produced situations rather than sudden disasters; and it does not support the narrative that subtends ecocritical accounts of risk perception in which the nuclear threat gives rise to an awareness of other kinds of threat before reaching the end of its relevance at the end of the Cold War.2 In what follows, I argue that the failure of nuclear waste to fit into the critical frames created by ecocriticism and risk theory to date offers an opportunity to expand those frames and overcome some of their limitations, especially the impulse towards a paranoid, totalizing realism that Peter van Wyck (2005) has described as central to ecocriticism in the risk society. Nuclear waste has durational forms that dwarf the human. It therefore dwells less in the economy of risk as it is currently conceptualized and more in the blown-out realm of deep time. Inhabiting the temporal scale that has recently been christened the Anthropocene, the geological era defined by the impact of human activities on the world’s geology and climate, nuclear waste unsettles any attempt at realist description, unveiling the limits of human imagination at every turn.3 By analyzing risk society through a heuristic of nuclear waste, this essay offers a critique of nuclear colonialism and environmental racism. At the same time, it shows how the apocalyptic mode in deep time allows narratives of environmental harm and danger to move beyond the paranoid logic of risk. In the world of deep time, all that might come to pass will come to pass, sooner or later. The endless maybes of risk become certainties. The impossibilities of our own deaths and the deaths of everything else will come. But so too will other impossibilities: talking macaws and alien visitors; the end of the colonial occupation of North America, perhaps, or a sudden human determination to let the world live. The end of capitalism may yet become more thinkable than the end of the world. Just wait long enough. Stranger things will happen.¶

#### Without engaging, we leave the system to right wing politics.

Boggs ’97Carl Boggs, 1997 (“The great retreat: Decline of the public sphere in late twentieth-century America,” Theory & Society, Volume 26, Issue 6, December, Available Online to Subscribing Institutions via SpingerLink, p. 773-775)

The decline of the public sphere in late twentieth-century America poses a series of great dilemmas and challenges. Many ideological currents scrutinized here — localism, metaphysics, spontaneism, post- modernism, Deep Ecology — intersect with and reinforce each other. While these currents have deep origins in popular movements of the 1960s and 1970s, they remain very much alive in the 1990s. Despite their different outlooks and trajectories, they all share one thing in common: a depoliticized expression of struggles to combat and overcome alienation. [end page 773]. The false sense of empowerment that comes with such mesmerizing impulses is accompanied by a loss of public engagement, an erosion of citizenship and a depleted capacity of individuals in large groups to work for social change. As this ideological quagmire worsens, urgent problems that are destroying the fabric of American society will go unsolved — perhaps even unrecognized — only to fester more ominously into the future. And such problems (ecological crisis, poverty, urban decay, spread of infectious diseases, technological displacement of workers) cannot be understood outside the larger social and global context of internationalized markets, finance, and communications. Paradoxically, the widespread retreat from politics, often inspired by localist sentiment, comes at a time when agendas that ignore or side-step these global realities will, more than ever, be reduced to impotence. In his commentary on the state of citizenship today, Wolin refers to the increasing sublimation and dilution of politics, as larger numbers of people turn away from public concerns toward private ones. By diluting the life of common involvements, we negate the very idea of politics as a source of public ideals and visions.74 In the meantime, the fate of the world hangs in the balance. The unyielding truth is that, even as the ethos of anti-politics becomes more compelling and even fashionable in the United States, it is the vagaries of political power that will continue to decide the fate of human societies.¶ This last point demands further elaboration. The shrinkage of politics hardly means that corporate colonization will be less of a reality, that social hierarchies will somehow disappear, or that gigantic state and military structures will lose their hold over people's lives. Far from it: the space abdicated by a broad citizenry, well-informed and ready to participate at many levels, can in fact be filled by authoritarian and reactionary elites — an already familiar dynamic in many lesser- developed countries. The fragmentation and chaos of a Hobbesian world, not very far removed from the rampant individualism, social Darwinism, and civic violence that have been so much a part of the American landscape, could be the prelude to a powerful Leviathan designed to impose order in the face of disunity and atomized retreat. In this way the eclipse of politics might set the stage for a reassertion of politics in more virulent guise — or it might help further rationalize the existing power structure. In either case, the state would likely become what Hobbes anticipated: the embodiment of those universal, collective interests that had vanished from civil society.75 [end page 774]¶ The historic goal of recovering politics in the Aristotelian sense, therefore, suggests nothing less than a revitalized citizenry prepared to occupy that immense expanse of public space. Extension of democratic control into every area of social life requires insurgency against the charade of normal politics, since the persistence of normal politics is just another manifestation of anti-politics. If authentic citizenship is to be forged, then information, skills, and attitudes vital to political efficacy need to flourish and be widely distributed throughout the population, without this, “consciousness transformation” is impossible, or at least politically meaningless. A debilitating problem with the culture of anti-politics, however, is that it precisely devalues those very types of information, skills, and attitudes.